

May 4, 1874

promissory note shall be invalid either because it is not stamped or is insufficiently stamped, or that any formality as to date or erasure of the stamps affixed thereto has been omitted, or that a wrong date has been placed upon such stamps, but no recovery shall be had or any verdict or judgment be rendered in any court upon such bill or note unless, before such recovery, verdict or judgment, stamps to the value of one quarter of one dollar upon every one hundred dollars payable in and by the said bill or note are affixed and cancelled upon such bill or note.

Hon. Mr. DORION said the resolution provided that no bill should be annulled in consequence of there being no stamps on it. The practical effect of this would be that nobody would stamp their notes. (*Hear, hear.*)

If he understood the motion, any man might be relieved of the penalty and loss he would otherwise sustain by merely paying a quarter of a dollar for every one hundred dollars of the amount of the note upon the eve of judgment being obtained against him.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON said that he had been asked by Hon. Mr. Cameron (Cardwell), who would not be able to be present, to take charge of the Bill. He (Hon. Mr. Holton) had understood his hon. friend assented to the resolution when it was introduced and explained by Mr. Cameron. Of course every precaution should be made for the protection of the revenue, and Mr. Cameron did not, he (Hon. Mr. Holton) thought, intend to attack the revenue in any way, but simply that when a man signs a note he shall be obliged to pay it, even if there is some irregularity with reference to the attachment of stamps. He (Hon. Mr. Holton) did not wish, however, to press the motion if there was any objection to it, but would allow it to stand till Mr. Cameron was present.

Hon. Mr. DORION said if one of the securities for the payment of the stamps was done away with directly, the promissory note was declared not to be invalid, and he repeated that it would be far better to do away with the stamps altogether.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON said the intention was to do away with the grossly immoral fact that a man was not bound to pay from some informality in the stamps. The law, until amended by the bill of Mr. Cameron's, would not protect and this resolution ought to be so amended as to secure the proper protection. It did not propose, as suggested by one hon. member, to affect the revenue in any way, but merely to provide that a note should be valid, even if there had been some irregularity in the matter of stamps.

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said they might as well repeal the Stamp Act altogether as pass this resolution. There would be no necessity for putting on stamps except in litigated cases.

The order was allowed to stand.

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DESPATCH OF PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. CAUCHON moved for a special committee to consider if any facilities could be given for the despatch of business in Parliament, especially with regard to the relations of the two

houses. In 1869 a similar motion had been made in the English House of Commons, and, although the positions were somewhat different, yet, he thought, at any rate they could try and see whether means could not be devised for saving time, and for helping forward legislation. After the discussion of the bill by the large committees it was referred to the other House, and then came back again; but, if a joint standing committee to examine these bills were appointed, there would be no injustice done, and no advantage taken by one House or the other, and the bill itself would be settled.

He proposed the Committee be composed of Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald and Hon. Messrs. Dorion, Holton, Cameron (Cardwell), Blake, Smith (Westmorland), and the mover. He advocated the formation of a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider Bills which might be introduced.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE strongly objected to the proposal for a conference of members of both Houses preliminary to the introduction of bills, which would be practically the legislating of one chamber. (*Hear, hear.*) It was desirable to separate the two Houses in their legislative capacity. He did not think the proposed scheme was consistent with our system of legislation.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON supposed the motion was made with a view of considering whether the English practice with regard to private bills might not be imposed here. A great saving of time was thereby effected. Whether the inconvenience of the present system here was enough to induce them to make any change, as in England, might be doubted, but at any rate there might be some enquiry made. Of course he agreed with the Premier in his general remarks, but with regard to private bills he sided with the member for Quebec Centre.

Hon. Mr. CAUCHON did not think it would interfere with public, but only with private, legislation.

The motion was carried.

Hon. Mr. CAUCHON then moved that the Senate be informed of the appointment of seven members to the Committee, and that they be called upon to appoint an equal number.—Carried.

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. WILKES moved to add Mr. McLeod, of Kent, New Brunswick, to the Committee on Public Accounts.

The motion was carried.

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MARINE TELEGRAPHS

On the motion of **Hon. Mr. HOLTON**, representing **Hon. Mr. BLAKE**, the House went into Committee on the Bill to regulate the construction and maintenance of the marine electrical telegraph, as amended by the Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraphs.

The various clauses were adopted with amendments. The Committee reported the Bill, and it was read a third time and passed.